

ECA Update February 22, 2016

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LA Daily Post

February 17, 2016

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Upcoming Events

February 2016

23

Senate Armed Services
Subcommittee on
Strategic Forces Hearing
**"Department of Energy
Atomic Energy
Defense Activities and
Program"**

(2:30 PM)

[Visit website.](#)

March 2016

03

Senate Energy and
Natural Resources
Hearing
**"Hearing to examine
the Department of
Energy's budget
request for Fiscal
Year 2017"**

(10:00 AM)

[Visit website.](#)

— Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) Foundation is pleased once again to be the recipient of support for student scholarships from Los Alamos National Security, LLC (LANS).

As part of its Community Commitment Plan, LANS, the Laboratory contractor, pledges to match up to \$250,000 in employee donations to the Los Alamos Employees' Scholarship Fund during 2016 fundraising campaign.

Since 2006, LANS has given more than \$4 million to the LANL Foundation for education in Northern New Mexico. Of that amount, \$2,712,740 was designated for scholarships. Past funding also supported the Foundation's Inquiry Science program that provides free learning materials, curriculum and teacher professional development to local elementary schools.

Tony Fox, Vice president of Institutional Advancement and Scholarships, has managed the Scholarship Fund at the LANL Foundation in collaboration with the Lab since 2001.

"Support from LANS has enabled the LANL Foundation to effectively invest in human potential and pave the way for students in Northern New Mexico to succeed," Fox said. "On behalf of our students, we are grateful to again receive this generous funding."

The Los Alamos Employees' Scholarship Fund is the largest scholarship pool in Northern New Mexico. Since 1999, the fund has awarded \$5 million to more than 1,000 students in Los Alamos, Mora, Rio Arriba, San Miguel, Sandoval, Santa Fe and Taos counties. Individual contributions from LANL employees have totaled over \$3.7 million in the past 18 years.

"LANL Foundation is proud to be a steward of the LANS scholarship investment in Northern New Mexico," Jenny Parks said, LANL Foundation CEO. "This continued partnership is reflective of our shared commitment to education and workforce development."

August 2016

9-10

Third Annual
Intermountain
Energy Summit
Idaho Falls, ID
[Visit website.](#)

September 2016

14-15

DOE National Cleanup
Workshop
Hilton Alexandria Mark
Center
Alexandria, VA
[Visit website.](#)

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For more information about the Los Alamos Employees' Scholarship Fund and way to give, [visit here](#)

In Our View: Feds Shirk Hanford Duty

The Columbian

February 17, 2016

[LINK](#)

President Obama's proposed federal budget for fiscal year 2017 is going nowhere. Members of the budget committees in both the Senate and the House of Representatives say they will not even bother to hold hearings to question the president's budget director about the plan.

But while the \$4.15 trillion proposal is more of a wish list than a serious request, one tiny aspect of it is problematic for the residents of Washington. The administration's budget calls for a \$289 million cut in funding for the cleanup at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation — a responsibility the federal government has ignored for far too long.

Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., said: "As every member of the Hanford community already knows, it is absolutely critical that work continues on schedule in a safe, efficient manner, so I will continue to make it clear to both the administration and my colleagues in the House and the Senate that the federal government cannot shirk its obligation on Hanford cleanup." Sen. Maria Cantwell, D-Wash., also weighed in, saying that the largest environmental cleanup in the world needs continued support.

Getting those in Washington, D.C., to pay attention will be a tall task. For decades, the federal government has ignored its duties when it comes to cleaning up radioactive waste at Hanford, which lies near the Columbia River about 200 miles upstream from Vancouver. Along the way, that negligence has imperiled one of the nation's major waterways and the residents of two states. It is difficult to imagine federal officials eschewing their duty if

Hanford rested on the banks of, say, the Potomac River. But when it is on the other side of the country, well, out of sight out of mind.

In the 1980s, Congress and President Reagan agreed to the creation of a national nuclear repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada, but former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nevada, blocked votes that could have brought that to fruition. As columnist George Will of The Washington Post wrote in 2014: “Rather than nuclear waste being stored safely in the mountain’s 40 miles of tunnels 1,000 feet underground atop 1,000 feet of rock, more than 160 million Americans live within 75 miles of one or more of the 121 locations where 70,000 tons of waste are stored.” Even a court-mandated Hanford Cleanup Consent Degree in 2010 has generated negligible response. Meanwhile, dozens of tanks at the site have begun leaking radioactive waste.

Obama’s proposed budget would provide about \$2 billion for continued cleanup efforts at Hanford. But it also would cut \$287 million from the Richland Operations Office, which is responsible for the cleanup aside from the waste tanks and a vitrification plant being built to treat the waste. The Office of River Protection, which oversees those projects, would have its budget trimmed by \$2 million.

While the specifics of the proposal will largely be ignored by congressional budget writers, it reflects a disturbing penchant of the other Washington to overlook the needs at Hanford. The region once played a key role in the development of the atomic bomb that helped the Allies to victory in World War II, and for years after that it assisted in the development of the United States’ nuclear arsenal. Such a level of commitment to the nation deserves some commitment in return, rather than allowing roughly 56 million tons of radio active waste to create an increasing danger.

Members of Washington’s congressional delegation should continue to impress upon their colleagues the importance of the Hanford cleanup. Ignoring the situation won’t make it go away.

Hanford board says proposed cleanup deadline too extreme

The Eagle

February 16, 2016

[LINK](#)

The Hanford Advisory board says a proposed change in deadlines to clean up radioactive waste in the reservation is too extreme.

The Tri-City Herald reports (<http://goo.gl/vsvRxm>) that the U.S. Department of Energy has proposed changing 64 deadlines in the Tri-Party Agreement that governs the Hanford cleanup, but the board says the new deadlines would not speed up work and would instead delay some projects.

State and federal environmental regulators say they have known for some time that deadlines for cleanup of central Hanford cannot be met. However, in a letter to the DOE and its regulators, the board wrote that the proposed extended deadlines don't reflect the urgency of cleanup.

Hanford for decades made plutonium for nuclear weapons and is one of the nation's most polluted nuclear sites.

House editorial: SMR permit will be historic milestone

Post-Register

February 21, 2016

[LINK](#)

It's entirely possible last week's announcement from the Department of Energy that it was issuing a site use permit to build a module nuclear reactor near the Idaho National Laboratory will be remembered as a historic moment in the development of nuclear power.

NuScale Power has been developing small modular reactors for years, but the granting of a site license is a major milestone toward actually building one for practical use. NuScale is partnering with Utah Associated Municipal Power

Systems, of which Idaho Falls Power is a member, to develop the reactor. The granting of a site permit here in eastern Idaho could mean big things for the region.

SMRs aren't just another nuclear program. People at NuScale and the Idaho National Laboratory see the technology as a potential bridge between Generator Three and Generation Four nuclear technology. What does that mean?

Without getting into the technical details, it could be a catalyst for getting the moribund American nuclear power program back on its feet after years of stagnation. The average age of American nuclear power plants is 35 years, and some are nearly a half-century old. A new plant hasn't gone online since 1997, though the Tennessee Valley Authority plans to bring another one onto the grid this year.

There are no panaceas in the nuclear power arena. Nuclear will always be controversial to some and anathema to others. But if the United States and the rest of the world are serious about reducing carbon emissions, nuclear has to be a major part of the picture.

It's entirely appropriate that NuScale's project should be built here in eastern Idaho, adjacent to the country's top nuclear research facility. It's additionally appropriate that Idaho Falls Power is a major partner in the project.

Eastern Idahoans should be proud that this world-class research and development is happening here. Yes, nuclear research requires vigilance, transparency and care. We must insist on it. But we should also embrace our possible role as the place where American nuclear technology takes a leap forward at long last.

Plans to bury nuclear waste near Lake Huron hit new roadblock

Michigan Radio

February 19, 2016

[LINK](#)

Plans for a nuclear waste dump site near Lake Huron in Ontario are on hold, at least for now.

The proposed Deep Geologic Repository (DGR) is the work of Canadian power company, Ontario Power Generation.

Canada's environment minister, Catherine McKenna, is now requesting additional information from OPG about the project including: alternate locations for the project; cumulative environmental effects of the project; and an updated list of mitigation commitment for each identified adverse effect, under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012.

"We had hoped that the environment minister would have outright rejected the proposal and just simply ended this insane scheme," said radioactive waste watchdog, Kevin Kamps. He is with the group, Beyond Nuclear, which has been fighting the proposal for over a decade.

OPG wants to bury approximately 200,000 cubic meters of low to medium level nuclear waste 680 meters – just under a half mile – below ground.

CREDIT ONTARIO POWER GENERATION

The site is in the shadow of the Bruce Power complex, the world's largest operating nuclear plant.

It's also less than a mile from the shore of Lake Huron, a body of water that supplies drinking water to more than 40 million people in the U.S. and Canada.

"We've seen what happened in Flint with lead poisoning of the drinking water – a population of 100,000; well this is a population 400 times larger than that," Kamps said. "Including, ironically enough, the city of Flint which now gets its drinking water, again, from Lake Huron."

OPG insists the limestone formation in the area is geologically stable. Kamps says the shaft OPG drills would pierce that geology and create a new water flow pathway, forming an escape path for radioactive waste.

He says a leak would spell disaster for all points downstream.

"We're talking tens of millions of people in a total of eight states and two provinces, and a large number of Native American first nations, who's water could become poisoned," Kamps said.

The proposed nuclear waste storage facility has been controversial on both sides of the border. Environmental groups have protested it; and dozens of local Michigan governments have passed resolutions opposing it.

Ontario Power Generation said in a statement:

...OPG understands the sensitivity of decisions around nuclear waste and respects the Minister's request for further information to inform a science-based decision...OPG maintains that a deep geologic repository is the right answer for Ontario's low and intermediate level waste from more than 40 years operating Ontario's reliable, GHG-free nuclear stations.

OPG must provide McKenna with a timeline for fulfilling her request by April 18.

Kamps says Beyond Nuclear remains committed to trying to stop the plans.

"We can't risk the drinking supply of 40 million people being poisoned," he said.

Report: Managing Global Nuclear Waste Could be Highly Profitable for South Australia

Waste Management World

February 15, 2016

[LINK](#)

A nuclear waste disposal facility in the South Australian outback would be viable and highly profitable, according to a new report by the Nuclear Fuel Cycle Royal Commission.

The Commission has published its Tentative Findings into the opportunities and risks represented by increasing the State's participation in nuclear fuel cycle activities.

Commissioner Kevin Scarce released the Tentative Findings document in Adelaide today, ahead of a five week feedback period.

"We have taken the somewhat unusual step of releasing our Tentative Findings to share with the community the evidence gathered into nuclear fuel cycle activities because we want South Australians to be involved in further refining, informing and improving the Commission's report, which will be delivered in May," he explained.

The key observations that frame the Commission's Tentative Findings include that:

South Australia can safely increase its participation in nuclear activities and, by doing so, significantly improve the economic welfare of the South Australian community

Community consent would be essential to the successful development of any nuclear fuel cycle activities

The management of the social, environmental, safety and financial risks of participation in these activities is not beyond South Australians

Long-term political decision-making, with bipartisan support at both state and federal levels, would be a prerequisite to achieving progress.

One of the key findings of the was that the storage and disposal of used nuclear fuel in South Australia would meet a global need and is likely to deliver substantial economic benefits to the community.

According to the commission, based on a storage capacity of 138,000 tonnes (~13%), financial assessments and economic modelling provided to the it by external expert consultants indicate that a storage and disposal facility could:

Generate total revenue of more than AU\$257 billion, with total costs of AU\$145 billion over 120 years

Gereate State revenue of more than AU\$5 billion per year over the facility's first 30 years of operation and AU\$2 billion per year over the following 40+ years at which point waste receipts nominally conclude.

Generate approximately 1500 full time jobs – peaking at between 4000-5000 – during the 25-year construction process and 600 full time jobs once operational.

The scenario is based on a storage capacity of 138,000 tonnes (~13%) of the projected global used fuel inventory and is based on a very conservative waste assumption that assumes no new (currently unplanned light water) reactors become operational after 2030.

A news report featuring an interview with Senator Sean Edwards explaining the background to the story, and why South Australia is making moves to become a global leader in nuclear waste management, can be viewed below.